



# A PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN FOR A STRONGER MEDICARE

## Why Women Need the Medicare Rx Drug Bill

### *The Seniors with the Greatest Need...*

- \* **Senior women live longer** than men by an average 5.4 years [*Nat. Center for Health Stats. 2000*]
- \* **Senior women are a majority** (57%) of the Medicare population – 72% of seniors aged 85 and older are women [*Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, 1999*]
- \* **Senior women have much less income than men**, with 43 percent of the income that men do
  - \* *Median income in 2000: \$19,168 for senior men, \$10,899 for senior women* [*Admin. on Aging*]
  - \* Over half of senior women will have incomes less than 135% federal poverty level
  - \* Over two-thirds of beneficiaries with incomes below the federal poverty level are women
- \* **Senior women spend more for their health care** – for senior women, 20% of their out of pocket spending is on health care (compared to 17% of men). [*July 2000 study*]
- \* **Senior women suffer from more chronic illnesses**, with 70% of women in Medicare suffering from 2 or more chronic illnesses (compared to 60% of men) [*Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey, 1999*]
  - \* 63% of women in Medicare suffer from **Arthritis** (compared to 49% of men)
  - \* 23% of women in Medicare suffer from **Osteoporosis/Broken Hip** (compared to 6% of men)
  - \* 57% of women in Medicare suffer from **Hypertension**, which leads to **Heart Disease** (compared to 52% of men)

***... will receive the greatest benefit.***

- \* **Half of senior women will receive complete drug coverage** Because more than half of women in Medicare have incomes less than 135% of the federal poverty level, the Medicare prescription drug bill will, for a \$2 to \$5 co-pay, cover their premium, deductible, and cost-sharing, without any exposure to a gap in coverage.
- \* **Senior women will receive the most help from Medicare bill** because they pay more nearly 18 percent more out-of-pocket for their health care with less income, and senior women are exposed to higher costs and more chronic illnesses than men.
- \* **Prescription drug discount card will save senior women** as much as 25% off their drug costs
- \* **Medicare drug benefit in 2006 will save senior women** as much as 60% off their drug costs
- \* **\$3,600 catastrophic cap will give senior women** the peace of mind of knowing that a catastrophic illness will not bankrupt them.
- \* **Disease management will help senior women** prevent the progression of chronic illnesses so, for example, a diabetes diagnosis does not result in expensive, life-changing treatments such as dependence on dialysis or loss of limbs.